

PRACTICAL CHANGES REDUCE COMPANY'S OPERATIONS  
COSTS

**ABOUT AUTOMATED MERCHANDISING SYSTEMS.** Automated Merchandising Systems, known as AMS, was founded in 1997 by Roy Steele, a veteran in the vending industry. Using innovative technology, Steele transformed the vending industry with a novel vend verification feature, "Sensit," and groundbreaking cabinet design that uses insulating foam as a structural element. AMS is based in Kearneysville, West Virginia, and has approximately 70 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** AMS is a company that continually looks for new ways to be innovative and optimize their production process to add value for their customers. For this reason, the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), a NIST MEP affiliate, approached AMS regarding federally funded technical assessments aimed at improving efficiencies and decreasing costs.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** The WVMEP team worked with the West Virginia University Industrial Assessment Center (WVU-IAC) and AMS staff to conduct an on-site technical assessment for the company. WVMEP completed a process review, interviewing key plant personnel and making observations on the plant floor to gain a better understanding of operations and identify improvement opportunities to increase efficiency. At the same time, WVU-IAC completed an energy assessment, conducting more interviews with key plant personnel and a thorough review of the company's energy bills. WVU-IAC also applied and monitored measuring devices to better understand AMS's energy consumption patterns.

Overall, the project generated 75 recommendations for process and energy improvements. AMS implemented the changes and saw immediate results, including significant reductions in energy costs, propane and electricity use, and carbon dioxide emissions.

"WVMEP has been a huge help to AMS. Over the years, we have developed a strong relationship with WVMEP. We have found the team to be very fair, unbiased, helpful, and a pleasure to work with. We look forward to continuing that relationship in an effort to grow AMS."

-Greg Mason, VP of Manufacturing

## RESULTS



Generated **75** recommendations for process and energy improvements



Saving **5%** of annual energy costs



**89,000** lb decrease in carbon dioxide emissions



Saving **39,280** kWh/yr in electricity, and 286 gal/yr in propane

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